

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 21, 2022

The Honorable Christine Wormuth
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Wormuth:

We are writing to urge you to swiftly implement the Naming Commission's ("Commission") recommendations and immediately remove the plaque depicting the Ku Klux Klan from the United States Military Academy ("USMA" or "West Point"). Part of what makes West Point such a respected institution is its commitment to honoring and enshrining the historical values of our armed forces. The monuments that decorate these facilities should not just document achievements—they should represent and honor what this country stands for.

After many years of advocacy by Members of Congress and cadets themselves, we welcome the changes the Commission proposed. One of the most concerning elements of the Commission's report was that a plaque depicting a hooded Ku Klux Klan figure is affixed to an educational building at West Point. The plaque, mounted in clear view on the entrance to Bartlett Hall Science Center, was flagged for review because the Commission understood that it would be senseless to exclude such symbols despite their mandate to review names of buildings, bases, and other items. The K.K.K. still exists as a source of hatred in America, and a plaque that could be perceived as immortalizing bigotry on a campus educating our country's future leaders has no place at West Point.

Following meetings with cadets in 2020, language was included in the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act to conduct a survey of students at military academies. That study, published on July 29, 2022, concerned us, as cadets felt they were targets of discrimination and some even feared backlash for speaking out on cultural issues. We can and must do better. We can do right by these future leaders by taking commonsense action to remove symbols of hate and division and show what this country truly stands for as we continue to develop more inclusive environments within our military.

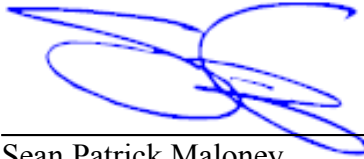
Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We hope you will act without delay to remove the plaque mounted at Bartlett Science Center. We look forward to working with you to build upon the respected legacy of our military academies and the important role that West Point plays in preparing the next generation of American leaders.

Sincerely,

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Washington, DC 20515

cc:

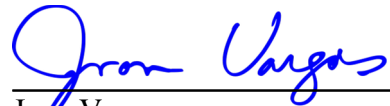
The Honorable Lt. Gen. Steven W. Gilland
Superintendent, United States Military Academy
646 Swift Road
West Point, NY 10996



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



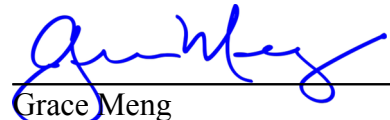
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
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Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

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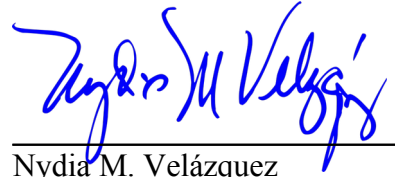
Troy Carter
Member of Congress



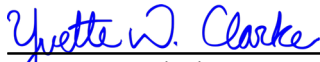
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



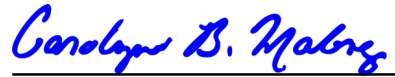
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

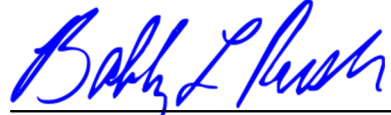


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

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Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



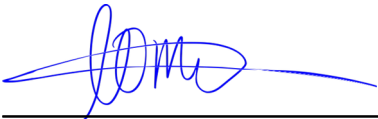
Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



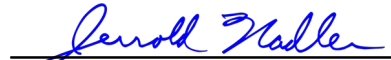
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress




Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress (OH-03)

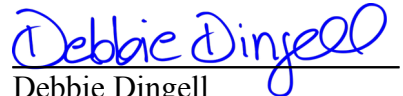


Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

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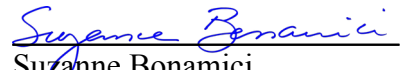
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

/s/

Patrick K. Ryan
Member of Congress